

college, started a small business, and started organizing, it is my ancestral homeland.

As a 35th-generation New Mexican, and not unlike the other families with roots in our State, I have a deep connection to the land, air, and water that sustains our communities. My ancestors settled there because they were drawn to the once-mighty Rio Grande and the sacred places that dot the sandstone mesas and granite mountains.

That is why I made the most of my time in Congress. I spent every opportunity meeting with families, listening to small business owners, learning about our tech industry, connecting with brave servicemembers and veterans, and working to deliver for the people.

When I was a little girl, none of this crossed my mind as a possibility for me. I wasn't one of the students picked out to apply to college. In fact, I didn't apply to college until I was 28. I was constantly struggling to make ends meet, and I raised my child as a single mom.

Growing up, Native women rarely held Federal leadership positions, and now little girls everywhere will know that they can run for Congress and win and that this country holds promise for everyone.

In fact, it is the unique experiences and struggles that make good leaders and why I became an organizer in the first place. I believe that it is the fact that I relied on food stamps to feed my family that makes me qualified to advocate for families like mine. It is the fact that I overcame addiction that makes me qualified to help people who are in their own struggles. It is the fact that I know what it is like to be indigenous that makes me qualified to advocate for our country to meet its trust responsibility.

The beauty of this Chamber is that each Member of Congress brings their unique experiences to the table and advocates for the causes we know best. With Speaker NANCY PELOSI's brilliant leadership, House Natural Resources Committee Chair RAÚL GRIJALVA's wisdom, and House Armed Services Committee Chair ADAM SMITH's guidance, and all the leadership here in the House, I had the opportunity to make a real difference for communities everywhere by addressing climate change; protecting voting rights; fighting for racial, environmental, and economic justice; and providing urgent COVID relief for millions of people.

I am also thankful for the collaboration and mentorship of my colleagues across the aisle, including Representative TOM COLE and the dean of the House, DON YOUNG, and my colleagues on the House Armed Services and Natural Resources Committees.

We worked in a bipartisan way to address issues, including missing and murdered indigenous women and ensuring that our servicemen and -women and military families have the resources that they need.

To my colleagues in the Tri-Caucus, thank you for embracing the issues facing Native Americans and working to address longstanding disparities in our communities.

I am proud that, with the support of my colleagues, several of my bills became law: the Not Invisible Act; Rent the Camo, a pilot program for pregnant servicemembers in the 2021 NDAA; the PROGRESS for Indian Tribes Act; provisions from my Military Housing Oversight and Servicemember Protection Act in the 2020 NDAA; the Native American Business Incubators Act; and the Veterans Affairs Tribal Advisory Committee Act.

I thought I would have more time here, but we are called to service in different ways.

Though I am excited to become the first Native American Cabinet Secretary in history, I am also sad to leave this Chamber. As a twice-elected Member of Congress, it has been both a pleasure and privilege to serve alongside you in our quest to improve the lives of the American people.

I want each of you to know that I am grateful for the knowledge you shared with me, the friendship, and the work we accomplished together, and I will miss all of you dearly.

I wouldn't be here today without my extraordinary staff in Albuquerque and here at the Capitol, the Natural Resources Committee staff, and the House Armed Services Committee staff. They all put in very long hours on behalf of our State and our country. My legislative accomplishments are also their accomplishments.

Additionally, thanks to all of the staff who work right here on the floor, whose dedication and experience keep our Congress running. I am so grateful to all of you.

To New Mexico, thank you. Thank you to the activists, supporters, families, and communities that make our State an incredible place to call home.

CONGRATULATING JIM SCHMITT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Jim Schmitt for being named Teacher of the Year in Duval County.

Mr. Schmitt received this honor for his work teaching global perspectives and research at Mandarin High School.

Serving as a teacher for 28 years, Mr. Schmitt has dedicated his career to improving both student learning and the methods teachers use to educate their students.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Schmitt has demonstrated his leadership ability by creating a discussion forum for teachers to share strategies, ensuring that teachers and students are prepared to learn in an in-class or online environment.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Mr.

Schmitt for his dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for his commitment to the success of his students and peers alike.

CONGRATULATING ALI PRESSEL

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Ali Pressel for being named Teacher of the Year in St. Johns County.

Ms. Pressel received this honor for her work teaching biology and agriculture at Creekside High School.

As a teacher for more than 15 years, Ms. Pressel worked tirelessly to help bring exciting educational opportunities in STEM to her students and to encourage them to engage their curiosity.

The philosophy that guides Ms. Pressel's work is that all students should have limitless opportunities to make connections in their communities through exploration and discovery.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Ms. Pressel for her dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for her commitment to the success of her students and peers alike.

CONGRATULATING KRISTAN CRONIN

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Kristan Cronin for being named Teacher of the Year in Nassau County.

Ms. Cronin received this honor for her work teaching fourth grade math, science, and social studies at Wildlight Elementary School.

Ms. Cronin has been a teacher for 17 years and is committed to guiding her students as they recognize and develop their talents and abilities. Ms. Cronin creates a hands-on work environment for her students to succeed, develops a love for knowledge, and helps them apply what they have learned to everyday life.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Ms. Cronin for her dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for her commitment to the success of her students and peers alike.

□ 1215

COMMONSENSE SOLUTIONS TO GUN VIOLENCE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise to call on our colleagues in the Senate to swiftly pass H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act; and H.R. 1446, the Enhanced Background Checks Act.

These bills are bipartisan, common-sense solutions to our Nation's gun violence crisis. Together, they accomplish what the vast majority of Americans want, to keep guns out of the wrong hands. I was proud to cosponsor both bills and vote for them when they passed the House last week. Now it is time for the Senate to take action.

In 2020, the Gun Violence Archive reported more than 40,000 deaths caused by gun violence, including over 1,300 children. Yet, despite the fact that gun violence continues to rise—and 90 percent of Americans, including 80 percent of gun owners support universal background checks—Republicans in Congress have spent years blocking bipartisan legislation to close our biggest loopholes and keep our communities safe.

Gun violence is preventable, yet it is such a tragically routine occurrence in this country that every community has a story. Mine is no exception.

I recently joined the Aurora Historical Society in Illinois to pay tribute to the five people murdered and the seven heroic first responders who were injured 2 years ago during a shooting at the Henry Pratt Company.

The mayor of Aurora, Richard Irvin, said after the shooting that “we as a society cannot allow these horrific acts to become commonplace.”

Yet, absurdly, we have already reached the point in which this unspeakable tragedy in Illinois is not even America’s most lethal mass shooting in a town named Aurora. So I call on my colleagues in the Senate to take action with us so that our children can someday live in a country in which gun violence is no longer commonplace.

Madam Speaker, as a nurse, I am thrilled that, in 2019, we finally directed Federal funding toward public health research on gun violence, for the first time in two decades. This type of research is critical for evidence-based policymaking, and I will keep fighting to make sure that that funding continues. But studying the problem is just the first step in our work to solve it. It is already past time to make simple changes that we already know work.

Madam Speaker, background checks are a simple, effective way to keep guns out of the wrong hands. A 1995 Connecticut law requiring background checks for firearm purchases was associated with a 40 percent decline in gun homicides and a 15 percent drop in gun suicides. Meanwhile, when Missouri repealed a similar law in 2007, gun homicides jumped by 23 percent, while firearm suicides rose by 16 percent. Homicides and suicides by other means stayed flat in both States; only gun violence changed.

I wish all our public health crises had such a clear, straightforward solution.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 8 would require a lifesaving background check for every gun sale, while H.R. 1446 would give the FBI more time to complete those checks before a single sale goes through. These bills would not add any new restrictions on who can buy a gun or what kind of gun that they can have. Rather, it would make it easier to enforce our existing gun laws and stop guns from being sold to people who are already prohibited from owning one.

Madam Speaker, I am not willing to wait for the next murderer to attack the next church in the next Charleston. I am not willing to wait for the next angry employee to murder his coworkers at the next Henry Pratt in the next Aurora, Illinois. I am not willing to wait for the next Aurora, Colorado, or the next Pulse Nightclub, or the next Parkland, or the next Tree of Life, or the next Sandy Hook. I am also not willing to wait for more women to be murdered by their abusers, or for more children to be lost to gun violence.

I am done waiting. My constituents are done waiting. Enough is enough.

Americans deserve to feel safe in their schools, in their houses of worship, in their movie theaters, in their workplaces, and in their homes. We can no longer live in a country where any building can so easily become a battlefield.

Madam Speaker, my colleagues and I in the House voted last week for a safer future for our children. Now I call on my colleagues in the Senate to save lives and send H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446 to the President’s desk.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o’clock and 19 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. STEVENS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Gracious God, as we approach another week of legislation, we pray with the psalmist Your favor on each leader in this Chamber. Endow them with Your righteousness, that the judgments of their hearts and the words of their mouths will demonstrate Your defense of the disheartened.

Grant them an understanding of Your perfect justice, that their legislation would reflect Your deep affection for those in need of Your salvation. May the words we speak to one another and the motions put forward be as refreshing as rain on a mown field. And may their decisions, their actions, and their passionate hearts serve this Nation as showers watering the earth.

Bless each and all of us that in all we say, in all that we do, in everything we accomplish this week would give honor to Your glorious name.

We offer this prayer to You in the strength of that name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 11(a) of House Resolution 188, the Journal of the last day’s proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SUPPORT THE NUTRITION CARE ACT

(Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER. Madam Speaker, March is National Nutrition Month, and I am proud to join my colleagues, Representatives JUDY CHU and JACKIE WALORSKI, in leading H.R. 1551, the Nutrition Counseling Aiding Recovery for Eating Disorders Act, or the Nutrition CARE Act for short.

Madam Speaker, eating disorders account for one death every 52 minutes and can impact the lives of individuals across their lifespan. This mental illness does not discriminate, but longstanding health inequities, implicit bias, and stigma contribute to why people of color with eating disorders are half as likely to be diagnosed or to receive treatment.

The Nutrition CARE Act would provide Medicare part B coverage for medical nutrition therapy for beneficiaries with eating disorders, meaning hundreds of thousands of Medicare beneficiaries who identify as Black, indigenous, or people of color would have coverage of a key treatment component.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to help lead this effort, and I urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1551 and bring it to the floor of this Congress.

CRISIS AT OUR BORDERS

(Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, as we speak, at President Biden’s behest, thousands of migrants are crossing our border illegally and being detained in facilities that are well over capacity.

Besides the many adults, the real victims are the thousands of unaccompanied migrant children, many being